

The Brethren Evangelist.

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"Let us go on unto Perfection."

\$1.50 Per Annum, in Advance.

VOLUME XII.

WATERLOO, IOWA, MAY 14, 1890.

NUMBER 20.

When the Sun Goes Down.

Though the morning may be dreary,
And the day be long and weary,
Though the clouds may darkly lower
And the tempest fiercely frown,
We shall quite forget the shadows
That have lingered in the meadows,
If there be a golden hour
When the sun goes down.

What though fate our hope opposes,
What though thorns shut out the roses,
And the cross be borne in sorrow
That we carry to the crown,
By and by we'll cease to wander
And we'll rest forever yonder
If there dawn a bright tomorrow
When life's sun goes down.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF S. H. BASHOR.

CHAPTER VII.

When I was twenty years of age I took part in my first public discussion single handed. Much controversy had been engaged in by our fireside theologians, upon the subject of the endless punishment of the wicked. We debated the question, not so much from a deep sense of conviction, one way or the other, as from a natural and acquired love of disputation. The various controversies around town culminated in a general desire to have the pros and cons of the question aired in public debate. William Williams, or Windy Williams as he was generally called from his leading characteristic of windy weather utterances, was selected as the champion of the orthodox element, and I as the representative of the liberals. The Baptist church was secured for the occasion, and the event was the jocular talk of the town and surrounding country for days and weeks before and after. The intervening time was spent by each disputant in elaborate preparation and in sundry bombastic forecastings of the dire results to his adversary's cause. I borrowed Winchester's Lectures, Manford's Monthly Magazine, the Franklin-Manford Debate, and various other documents, from which I pilfered with blushing boldness, until I was completely saturated with universalist arguments and theories from "top to toe." "Windy" was equally alert and doubtless fully as original in his methods of preparation. I say this in justification of his reputation, as I have since discovered some of the "grape and canister," with which he modestly boasted he would "sweep the deck at the first fire," in "Hall's Universalism Against Itself," and similar works.

When the evening, for which the discussion had been announced, arrived, the house in which it was to be held was jammed from "cellar to garret," with people of all ages, sorts, and sizes, who had come to "see the fun." Brother Williams did not appear until a delegation of his friends and supporters waited on him at his home and "escorted him in state to the arena." They reported their champion ready to retire for the night and that it required some rather earnest persuasion to get him to "don his war paint and repair to the onset." But this Windy stoutly denied. He had "only forgotten the hour and was late in starting, sir. That is all." On his arrival Mr. Milton Crockett, a staunch Universalist, and a man of some culture and judgment, was chosen as chairman and presided with dignity and fairness. Brother Williams opened the engagement with a rattling half hours speech, not three connected sentences of which I heard with a sufficient degree of clearness to afterwards remember and repeat. He spoke loud enough and sufficiently distinct to be heard across a "ten acre lot," but I had no time to listen. Both my time and attention were devoted to the double task of screwing my courage up to the sticking point and locking the arms of my fast expiring memory around the well prepared "original arguments" I had pilfered from Manford, Winchester and others. Williams sat down covered with applause and perspiration, and I "arose to the occasion" only to find my "powder wet and my ramrod gone." All the formulated arguments of several weeks hard work, had like the Arabs "folded their tents and silently stole away." The opposition saw my mental state, hooted, stamped and howled in derision. That turned the tide of my feelings from "tweedle dum to tweedle dee." From embarrassment and fear I sprang into anger and self control. Crockett gave me an approving nod; my supporters applauded and Dr. Houston, my bosom friend, whispered "sail in Greely, keep your powder dry and lick

him if it kills you." I did "sail in," with the energy of a cyclone, and what I lacked in argument was amply made up in assertion and noise. The audience ceased its laughter and my opponent his sneers, and listened with an attention born of the occasion. I sat down amid a perfect storm of applause, even brother Williams heartily joining in. I believe it was sincere. But I was so frightened I scarcely knew whether to sit still or run. The next two speeches were in effect repetitions of the first, and a more highly elated crowd never left a conflict than the disputants and their chief friends. Both felt they had soundly thrashed the "other feller," and had covered themselves all over with distinction and glory. "Windy" feels good over it yet. We never meet that he does not mention the occurrence as one particularly complimentary to us both. He always refers to it as "the time I gave you that well-deserved drubbing."

The county paper gave a short but highly colored report of the affair, attributing to each champion an equal share of eloquence and argument.

Though conscious of failure in several respects and deeply chagrined at the treacherous conduct of my memory, I for the first time, felt that public speech would be a matter of personal choice, and that by study and discipline I could attain to some degree of success in the art. Many of my acquaintances urged me to prepare for some of the learned professions. Law, the platform and the pulpit were each suggested in turn. I felt unfitted, both in nature and taste, for the pulpit. The platform was beyond my reach, and the law was repugnant to the feelings of my father. He said the only difference between a lawyer and a gambler was that the latter lived by cheating and the former by lying. As he had had a rather extended experience with the "meshes of the law" and the methods of the profession I accepted his estimate as measure of my correct.

The medical profession offered some inducements, but felt so what to do. I had served a father in the milling business, and I was master of the trade of "head miller," either filled or offered moderate wages. I worked here and there, first at one thing and then at another, managing to keep "soul and body together," until the summer of 1875, visiting with a family near Whitesville during hay making. I engaged to assist through harvest. The second morning of my engagement, as we drove into the field, in tossing a shock of hay on the wagon, something, either a seed or an insect, fell into my left eye and poisoned it so that I was forced to quit work the following day. In early life I had lost the sight of the right eye through paralysis of the optic nerve, and the left being now rendered useless from poison, I was unfitted for work for almost a year. Every old lady I met had a new remedy to suggest which was a "sure cure," each of which I applied regardless of name or strength until, through the "versatility of eye waters" my eye reached a stage where help was almost impossible. Dr. Bishop of St. Joseph, Mo., gave me some relief, and Dr. Bennet of Ft. Wayne, Ind. effected a final cure.

The summer was necessarily spent in idleness, and the money laid up from the winter and spring work consumed in paying current expenses. Boys brought up in good homes, under a watchful mother's care, know nothing of the real disadvantages and hardships of life. Every want is anticipated, every need supplied, and every comfort suggested. There is no pinching of hunger, no empty purse, no unwelcome chair filled and no plate reluctantly set, but with a motherless boy it is often the opposite. He misses mother and more than misses home. He intuitively knows and feels that his room is preferred above his company again and again, when to move would land him in the shelterless cold. But what can he do? No other place is offered and no other door open except the door of the gambling hall or saloon. Married brothers and sisters he may have, who might be disposed to give him a home, but these have another to consult and with "the other" a brother-in-law is not always a welcome guest. It is no wonder such boys often come to naught in this Christian land. The only wonder is that they ever come to anything else. Some seem to bear on them the mark of Cain. In some way the tide

sets in against them, and that too without any apparent external cause. They get the name of "ne'er do well" and work hard, live cautiously, act sincerely, or what not, it sticks to them with the tenacity of death. Looking back over a varied life and remembering the pitfalls that were set, the temptations purposely thrown in the way, the antagonisms carefully and deliberately planned, the slights premeditatedly given, the humiliating positions forced into and the thousand and one streams of evil and discouragement that flowed into the torrent of disadvantage under which a combination of uninvited circumstances forced me to live and to labor, I can but look upon it as a special interposition of Divine Providence that my life escaped the Niagara of moral ruin. But on the other hand there were some pleasant things encountered and some warm, earnest, helpful, friends met who spared neither labor nor pains to make life worth living, and an exalted ambition and purpose seem precious. In conversation with my father, one morning, I learned that he entertained graver fears as to the outcome of my life than of any of the children. He said I was different from all the rest from childhood up, lacked the quiet, steady, even nature, of the rest, that while I had done nothing to injure the good name of the family, nor to degrade myself, he thought it best to give me a fair statement of his feelings regarding my future. Angered, more at his implied distrust, than at his manner or words, I replied that while I was not blameless I was the victim of circumstances, beyond the limits of personal control in the past, but "circumstance or no circumstance," I would make it the one all consuming purpose of my life to see that he, and all others who held, or might hold, adverse opinions of me should be effectually disappointed in all prognostications of my future life public or private. That was the turning point.

From that day I had but one absorbing object in view and that was to be something at something above what I had been and about my relatives or acquaintances expected to be. There are times when a man's life is revealed to his better judgment in all its wretchedness of effort and barrenness of result, and when there comes with it a noble purpose, and the energy of inspired determination. I think I was born there. The body and bodily senses had been born years before, and I had moved the victim of their whims and fancies. The higher faculties, the real energies of the soul, had had no life, no impulse, no ideal higher than submission to the flesh; but in that brief hour I was aroused as if from a waking dream, and saw for the first time the dawning of day. I took no delight in old associations and no pleasure in past enjoyments. What my mission was I did not know, but I had a faint idea; a sort of dim presage of future effectiveness in winning and controlling men; but in what direction or channel I did not comprehend.

The world took on a different hue. My brothers and sisters, and even father seemed to see the change, and spoke kindly, helpful words, accompanied by acts of renewed confidence, all of which lent new impulse to my efforts and purposes. Perhaps I was to blame for any apparent coldness that existed between any of us. Looking back now over the lapse of long, changeful years, I think I was. A black sheep never mingles readily with the rest of the flock. The reason, I suppose, is because it is black and feels its blackness, while the others only see it. Be that as it may, my roving, restless nature, made life ever irksome in any one locality, after a few months stay, and staid, steady people lose all patience with me now as they did then.

During the summer of 1875, I made my home with my brother-in-law: Mr. Isaac N. Taylor, and received from him many favors as also from his wife, my sister. There is, however, another side to the subject of the "homeless boy," that might be presented for the benefit of such, if he should chance to read this page. Because he is homeless is no reason why he should expect the sympathy and help of others, without merit, or when he can help himself. It is no sufficient reason for his falling into low, loaferish associations, or spending his time in questionable places and pursuits. In this free country of ours, where the rail splitter, the tanner, and the canal boy, alone and by unaided effort, have risen to the highest honors and office within the gift of the people, any boy, no difference how lowly or poor, can, by honest toil,